

Title 46

PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS

Part XLV. Medical Professions

Subpart 3. Practice

Chapter 42. Illegal Payments; Required Disclosures of Financial Interests

§4201. Scope and Purpose of Chapter

A. Scope of Chapter. The rules of this Chapter interpret, implement, and provide for the enforcement of R.S. 37:1744 and R.S. 37:1745, requiring disclosure of a physician's financial interest in another health care provider to whom or to which the physician refers a patient and prohibiting certain payments in return for referring or soliciting patients.

B. Declaration of Purpose; Interpretation and Application. Physicians owe a fiduciary duty to patients to exercise their professional judgment in the best interests of their patients in providing, furnishing, prescribing, recommending, or referring patients for health care items and services, without regard to personal financial recompense. The purpose of these rules and the laws they implement is to prevent payments by or to a physician as a financial incentive for the referral of patients to a physician or other health care provider for diagnostic or therapeutic services or items. These rules shall be interpreted, construed, and applied so as to give effect to such purposes and intent.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1744, R.S. 37:1745, and R.S. 37:1270(B)(6).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 20:1111 (October 1994).

§4203. Definitions and Construction

A. Definitions. As used in this Chapter:

Board the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners.

Financial Interest a significant ownership or investment interest established through debt, equity, or other means and held, directly or indirectly, by a physician or a member of a physician's immediate family, or any form of direct or indirect remuneration for referral.

Group Practice a group of two or more physicians legally organized as a general partnership, registered limited liability partnership, professional medical corporation, limited liability company, foundation, nonprofit corporation, faculty practice plan, or similar organization or association:

a. in which each physician who is a member of the group provides substantially the full range of services which the physician routinely provides, including medical or podiatric care, consultation, diagnosis, or treatment, through the joint use of shared office space, facilities, equipment, and personnel;

b. for which substantially all of the services of the physicians who are members of the group are provided through the group and are billed under a billing number assigned to the group and amounts so received are treated as receipts of the group;

c. in which the overhead expenses of and the income from the practice are distributed in accordance with methods previously determined;

d. in which no physician who is a member of the group directly or indirectly receives compensation based on the volume or value of referrals by the physician, except payment of a share of the overall profits of the group, which may include a productivity bonus based on services personally performed or services incident to such personally performed services, so long as the share of profits or bonus is not determined in any manner which is directly related to the volume or value of referrals by such physician;

e. in which members of the group personally conduct no less than 75 percent of the physician-patient encounters of the group practice; and

f. in the case of a faculty practice plan associated with a hospital, institution of higher education, or medical school with an approved medical residency training program in which physician members may provide a variety of different specialty services and provide professional services both within and outside the group, as well as perform other tasks such as research, solely with respect to services provided within such faculty practice plan.

Health Care Item any substance, product, device, equipment, supplies, or other tangible good or article which is or may be used or useful in the provision of health care.

Health Care Provider any person licensed by a department, board, commission, or other agency of the state of Louisiana to provide, or which does in fact provide, preventive, diagnostic, or therapeutic health care services or items.

Immediate Family as respects a physician, the physician's spouse, children, parents, and siblings.

Investment Interest a security issued by an entity, including, without limitation, shares in a corporation, interests in or units of a partnership, bonds, debentures, notes, or other debt instruments.

Payment the tender, transfer, distribution, exchange, or provision of money, goods, services, or anything of economic value.

Person includes a natural person or a partnership, corporation, organization, association, facility, institution, or any governmental subdivision, department, board, commission, or other entity.

Physician includes a doctor of medicine or a doctor of podiatric medicine.

Referral any direction, recommendation, or suggestion given by a health care provider to a patient, directly or indirectly, which is likely to determine, control, or influence the patient's choice of another health care provider for the provision of health care services or items.

Remuneration for Referral any arrangement or scheme, involving any remuneration, directly or indirectly, in cash or in kind, between a physician, or an immediate family member of such physician, and another health care provider which is intended to induce referrals by the physician to the health care provider or by the health care provider to the physician, other than any amount paid by an employer to an employee who has a bona fide employment relationship with the employer, for employment in the furnishing of any health care item or service.

B. Construction. Masculine terms wheresoever used in this Chapter shall be deemed to include the feminine.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1744, R.S. 37:1745, and R.S. 37:1270(B)(6).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 20:1111 (October 1994).

Subchapter A. Illegal Payments

§4205. Prohibition of Payments for Referrals

A. A physician shall not knowingly and willfully make or offer to make any payment, directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly, in cash or in kind, to induce another person to refer an individual to the physician for the furnishing or arranging for the furnishing of any health care item or service.

B. A physician shall not knowingly and willfully solicit, receive, or accept any payment, directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly, in cash or in kind, in return for referring a patient to a health care provider for the furnishing or arranging for the furnishing of any health care item or service.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1745 and R.S. 37:1270(B)(6).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 20:1112 (October 1994).

§4207. Exceptions

A. Proportionate Return on Investment. Payments or distributions by an entity representing a direct return on investment based upon a percentage of ownership shall not be

deemed a payment prohibited by R.S. 37:1745(B) or by §4205 of these rules, provided that:

1. the amount of payment to an investor in return for the investment interest is directly proportional to the amount or value of the capital investment (including the fair market value of any pre-operational services rendered) of that investor;

2. the terms on which an investment interest was or is offered to an investor who is in a position to make or influence referrals to, furnish items or services to, or otherwise generate business for the entity must be no different from the terms offered to other investors;

3. the terms on which an investment interest was or is offered to an investor who is in a position to make or influence referrals to, furnish items or services to, or otherwise generate business for the entity must not be related to the previous or expected volume of referrals, items or services furnished, or the amount of business otherwise generated from that investor to the entity;

4. there is no requirement that an investor make referrals to, be in a position to make or influence referrals to, furnish items or services to, or otherwise generate business for the entity as a condition for becoming or remaining an investor;

5. the entity or any investor does not market or furnish the entity's items or services to investors differently than to non-investors; and

6. the entity does not loan funds to or guarantee a loan for an investor who is in a position to make or influence referrals to, furnish items or services to, or otherwise generate business for the entity if the investor uses any part of such loan to obtain the investment interest.

B. General Exceptions. Any payment, remuneration, practice, or arrangement which is not prohibited by or unlawful under §1128B(b) of the Federal Social Security Act (Act), 42 U.S.C. §1320a-7b(b), as amended, with respect to health care items or services for which payment may be made under Title XVIII or Title XIX of the Act, including those payments and practices sanctioned by the secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, through the Office of Inspector General, pursuant to §1128B(b)(3)(E) of the Act, through regulations promulgated at 42 CFR §1001.952, as the same may hereafter be amended, shall not be deemed a payment prohibited by R.S. 37:1745.B or by §4205 of these rules with respect to health care items or services for which payment may be made by any patient or private or governmental payer.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1745 and R.S. 37:1270(B)(6).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 20:1112 (October 1994).

§4209. Effect of Violation

A. Any violation of or failure of compliance with the prohibitions and provision of §4205 of this Chapter shall be

deemed a violation of the Medical Practice Act, R.S. 37:1285 or of the Podiatry Practice Act, R.S. 37:624, as applicable, providing cause for the board to suspend or revoke, refuse to issue, or impose probationary or other restrictions on any license or permit held or applied for by a physician culpable of such violation.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1745 and R.S. 37:1270(B)(6).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 20:1113 (October 1994).

Subchapter B. Disclosure of Financial Interests in Third-Party Health Care Providers

§4211. Required Disclosure of Financial Interest

A. **Mandatory Disclosure.** A physician shall not make any referral of a patient outside the physician's group practice for the provision of health care items or services by another health care provider in which the referring physician has a financial interest (as defined by §4203.A.3 and §4211.B), unless, in advance of any such referral, the referring physician discloses to the patient, in accordance with §4215 of this Chapter, the existence and nature of such financial interest.

B. **Special Definition: Significant Financial Interest.** As to a physician, an ownership or investment interest shall be considered "significant," within the meaning of §4211.A, if such interest satisfies any of the following tests.

1. Such interest, in dollar amount or value, represents five percent or more of the gross assets of the health care provider in which such interest is held.

2. Such interest represents five percent or more of the voting securities of the health care provider in which such interest is held.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1744 and R.S. 37:1270(B)(6).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 20:1113 (October 1994).

§4213. Prohibited Arrangements

A. Any arrangement or scheme, including cross-referral arrangements, which a physician knows or should know has a principal purpose of ensuring or inducing referrals by the physician to another health care provider, which, if made directly by the physician would be a violation of §4211, shall constitute a violation of §4211.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1744 and R.S. 37:1270(B)(6).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 20:1113 (October 1994).

§4215. Form of Disclosure

A. **Required Contents.** The disclosure required by §4211 of this Chapter shall be made in writing, shall be furnished to the patient, or the patient's authorized representative, prior to or at the time of making the referral, and shall include:

1. the physician's name, address, and telephone number;
2. the name and address of the health care provider to whom the patient is being referred by the physician;
3. the nature of the items or services which the patient is to receive from the health care provider to which the patient is being referred; and
4. the existence and nature of the physician's financial interest in the health care provider to which the patient is being referred.

B. **Permissible Contents.** The form of disclosure required by §4211 of this Chapter may include a signed acknowledgment by the patient or the patient's authorized representative that the required disclosure has been given.

C. **Approved Form.** Notice to a patient given substantially in the form of Disclosure of Financial Interest prescribed in the Appendix to these rules shall be presumptively deemed to satisfy the disclosure requirements of this Subchapter.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1744 and R.S. 37:1270(B)(6).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 20:1113 (October 1994).

§4217. Effect of Violation; Sanctions

A. **Effect of Violation.** Any violation of or failure of compliance with the prohibitions and provision of §4211 of this Chapter shall be deemed a violation of the Medical Practice Act, R.S. 37:1285 or of the Podiatry Practice Act, R.S. 37:624, as applicable, providing cause for the board to suspend or revoke, refuse to issue, or impose probationary or other restrictions on any license or permit held or applied for by a physician culpable of such violation.

B. **Administrative Sanctions.** In addition to the sanctions provided for by §4217, upon proof of violation of §4211 by a physician, the board may order that all or any portion of any amounts paid by a patient, and/or by any third-party payer on behalf of a patient, for health care items or services furnished upon a referral by the physician in violation of §4211, be refunded by the physician to such patient and/or third-party payer, together with legal interest on such payments at the rate prescribed by law calculated from the date on which any such payment was made by the patient and/or third-party payers.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:1744 and R.S. 37:1270(B)(6).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Medical Examiners, LR 20:1113 (October 1994).

Appendix

[Name of Physician/Group]

[Address]

[Telephone Number]

DISCLOSURE OF
FINANCIAL INTEREST
As Required by R.S. 37:1744 and
LAC 46:XLV.4211-4215

TO: _____ DATE: _____

(Name of Patient to Be Referred)

(Patient Address)

Louisiana law requires physicians and other health care providers to make certain disclosures to a patient when they refer a patient to another health care provider or facility in which the physician has a significant financial interest. [I am/we are] referring you, or the named patient for whom you are legal representative, to:

(Name and Address of Provider to Whom Patient is Referred)

to obtain the following health care services, products, or items:

(Purpose of the Referral)

[I/we] have a financial interest in the health care provider to whom we are referring you, the nature and extent of which are as follows:

PATIENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, the above-named patient, or legal representative of such patient, hereby acknowledge receipt, on the date indicated and prior to the described referral, of a copy of the foregoing Disclosure of Financial Interest.

(Signature of Patient or Patient's Representative)

